

TARPTAUTINIS LONDONAS  
LONDON INTERNATIONAL  
NAUJASIS IRANO MENAS  
NEW IRANIAN ART  
POLEMISKAI MAZA  
POLEMICALLY SMALL

# TRYS PARODOS. TRYS POŽIŪRIAI. V I E N A S P A S A U L I S

**\*Edwardas Lucie-Smithas** (g. 1933) – žinomas britų rašytojas, poetas, meno kritikas, kuratorius ir daugiau kaip 60 knygų apie meną autorius. Jis išleido daug grožinės literatūros, meno istorijos, kritikos knygų. Kai kurių tiražas siekia 250 000 egzempliorių. Knygos „Meno kryptys nuo 1945-ųjų: temos ir koncepcijos“ (pirmą kartą išleista 1969 m. ir iki pat šiol perleidžiama įvairiomis kalbomis, tarp jų kinų, arabų ir persų), „XX amžiaus vizualusis menas“, „Meno sąvokų žodynas“ ir „Menas šiandien“ tapo nepakeičiamais vadovais po meno pasaulį. E. Lucie-Smithas pastaruosius kelis dešimtmečius intensyviai tyrinėja meno proceso marginalizacijos ir naujų meno centrų formavimosi periferijoje klausimus. Meno kritikas kuruoja meno projektus, skaito paskaitas Lotynų Amerikoje, Viduriniųjų Rytų šalyse, Kinijoje, Rytų Europoje, Australijoje ir Naujojoje Zelandijoje.

**\*\*Stuckism** – meno judėjimas, atsiradęs 1999 m. Jungtinėje Karalystėje. Jo iniciatoriai – menininkai Billy Childishas ir Charles'as Thomsonas – siekė propaguoti figūrinę tapybą ir priešintis konceptualiajam menui. Grupė susikūrė kaip alternatyva YBA (Young british artists) – neformaliai Jaunųjų britų menininkų sambūriui. Šiandien pasaulyje yra daugiau kaip 200 stakistų grupių, veikiančių 47 šalyse. Pagrindiniai jų nariai nuolat rengia demonstracijas prie TATE galerijos, protestuoja prieš Turnerio prizą ir Ch. Saatchi šiuolaikinio meno populiarinimo politiką.

Klaipėdos kultūrų komunikacijų centras (KKKC) pristato tris pasaulinio garso britų meno kritiko Edwardo Lucie-Smitho\* projekto „3 worlds in 1“ parodas: „Tarptautinis Londonas“, „Polemiškai mažas“ ir „Naujasis Irano menas“.

„Šių dienų horizontaliosios, tinklinės struktūros meno laukas pasižymi meno procesus generuojančių centrų gausa. Jūs inicijuoja jaunoji kūrėjų karta. Tokių bendruomenių koegzistavimas ir aktyvumas tampa varomąja Londono jėga“, – teigia E. Lucie-Smithas. Todėl šiose trijose parodose nerasime visiems gerai pažįstamų *brendų*. Kuratoriai akcentuoja kylančių jaunųjų autorių kūrybinę drąsą, energiją, inovatyvumą, gebėjimą rasti savo nišą persisotinusoje meno rinkoje.

E. Lucie-Smitho projektas, pristatomas KKKC, išskiria kelis esminius šiuolaikinio meno pasaulio fragmentus, būdingus margam ir eklektiškam Londonui.

Paroda „Tarptautinis Londonas“ – tai plačios ir mišrios meno bendruomenės kūryba. Ekspozicijos autoriai – Jungtinėje Karalystėje studijas baigę ir jau 10–15 metų sostinėje sėkmingai kuriantys britai bei kiti šalių menininkai. Šio reiškinio pristatymui kuratoriai pasirinko 13 autorių, kurie kuria instaliacijas, fotografijas, provokuojamus vaizdo darbus, performansus.

Paroda „Polemiškai mažas“, pasak E. Lucie-Smitho, kreipia dėmesį į du dalykus: tapybos atgimimą Londone ir miniatiūros strategiją, kaip priešstatą išpūstai šiuolaikinio meno retorikai. 26 autorių ekspozicija yra parengta bendradarbiaujant su Londono kuratoriumi, galerininku Zavieru Ellisu. Revizuodamas tradicinės tapybos sampratą, E. Lucie-Smithas klausia: „Ar mažąja forma galima atskleisti konceptualius dalykus taip pat įtaigiai kaip ir didelio formato paveikslais ar šiuolaikinių medijų kūriniams?“

Pasak parodos „Polemiškai mažas“ lietuviškosios dalies kuratoriaus, menotyrininko Igno Kazakevičiaus, Lietuvoje tapybos ir miniatiūros derinys yra prilyginamas kičiui, eskizui, sumažintai didelio paveikslų versijai. Reta tapytojų, sąmoningai kuriančių miniatiūras, o dar rečiau mažuosius tapybos kūrinius galima pavadinti šiuolaikinio meno kūriniams. Todėl įvertinti miniatiūros koncepciją buvo pakviesti ne tik tapybos, bet ir fotografijos, garso, piešinio medijas naudojantys autoriai. Parodoje dalyvauja Gytis Skudžinskas, Juozas Laivys, Laisvydė Šalčiūtė, Mindaugas Bumblys, Artūras Bumšteinas, Andrius Zakarauskas, Žygmantas Augustinas.

Pristatydamas parodą „Naujasis Irano menas“, E. Lucie-Smithas teigia, kad šios šalies scena yra bene svarbiausia Vidurio Rytuose. Susidomėjimas šiuo regionu Londone auga itin sparčiai. Projekte rodomi fotomenininkai buvo atrinkti per pirmąjį atvirą, 2010 m. *facebook*’e vykusį Irano meno konkursą „Persbook“. Jų darbams būdingi tarp rytų ir vakarų besiblaškancio žmogaus įvaizdžiai, antropologinis dvilypumas. Socialinių grupių, politinės, šeimos, asmeninės ir visuomeninės laisvės metaforos perteiktos vizualizuojant žmogaus kūną. Kūnu taip pat „matuojama“ ir islamo vaizduojamojo meno tradicija, šalies uždaramas. Autoriai siekia peržengti kultūrinės ribas, kanonus, socialinių dogmų stereotipus. Ši paroda įveikė Irano vyriausybės cenzūrą ir Klaipėdą pasiekė internetu.

Ketvirtąją Londono paralele būtų galima pavadinti KKKC pristatomus stakistus (*Stuckism*\*\*). Londono *stakistus* matote parodoje „Polemiškai mažas“, o Teherano grupuotės kūrinius – „Naujojo Irano meno“ parodoje.

**3 WORLDS IN 1**

The aim of this exhibition is to give a snapshot view of two very different contemporary art worlds – the one that now exists in London, and the one that has grown up in Iran in the years since the fall of the Shah in 1979. London is now undoubtedly one of the world capitals of contemporary art, rivaled in this respect only by Berlin, since both Paris and New York seem to be losing their attraction as centers for young artists. It owes its pre-eminence to the rise of what are now called the YBAs (Young British Artists) in the 1990s. However the YBA group are not so young any more – they are in their mid 40s – and several generations of artists have made their appearance in London since then. My concept here has been to show a few selected artists on a larger scale, and many more in a section entitled Polemically Small. Polemically Small stresses two things – first the strong revival of painting and collage in London, and second the return to small, sometimes miniature scale, which is a revolt against the inflated rhetoric that seems to have overtaken so much contemporary art. This section has been chosen in conjunction with Xavier Ellis, who is not only a practicing artist, represented in the other section of the show, but a gallerist ([www.charliesmithlondon.com](http://www.charliesmithlondon.com)) and curator well known for a series of innovative survey shows under the title *The Future Can Wait* ([www.thefuturecanwait.com](http://www.thefuturecanwait.com)). For help with this section special thanks are due to Jason Zeloof.

Iran has produced an astonishing quantity of interesting art in recent years – it is undoubtedly the creative powerhouse in the visual arts of the Middle East. It has been particularly strong in photography. The photographs shown here emerged from a competition for young Iranian artists run on Facebook last year, where I had the honor to be chairman of the jury. The works by Hojat Amani, who lives and works in Luristan, stress the way Iranian contemporary art draws on age-old roots. His subject-matter – angels – is something deeply rooted in Iranian and Islamic tradition. There are also some works by artists from an Iranian Stuckism group – Stuckism being a deliberately retro response to conventional avant-gardism that was pioneered in Britain and that has now given birth to more than 200 affiliated groups in 47 countries, bound together by the enormous web site [www.stuckism.com](http://www.stuckism.com). That is to say, it is a supposedly retro impulse that is expert in the use of the most modern means of communication. The Iranian section owes a great deal to my friend and colleague Janet Rady ([www.janetradyfineart.com](http://www.janetradyfineart.com)).

Taken together, these two sections demonstrate both the importance of local traditions and at the same time the inexorable growth of artist internationalism. It is worth noting, for example, that the Iranian photographs shown here have passed all frontiers electronically. They arrived as picture files, and were printed in Klaipeda.

The third world of the title is of course Lithuania itself. Lithuanian art is represented by a small group of Polemically Small works, to demonstrate how the idea works in a Lithuanian context. The most important thing, however, is the Lithuanian audience. How will these works impact on Lithuanian culture? This exhibition has been made for a Lithuanian public. Their response will be very much part of the show.

Edward Lucie-Smith





Angela Bartram

Born: 1969

Education: 2002—Cur. PhD in Fine Art Middlesex University

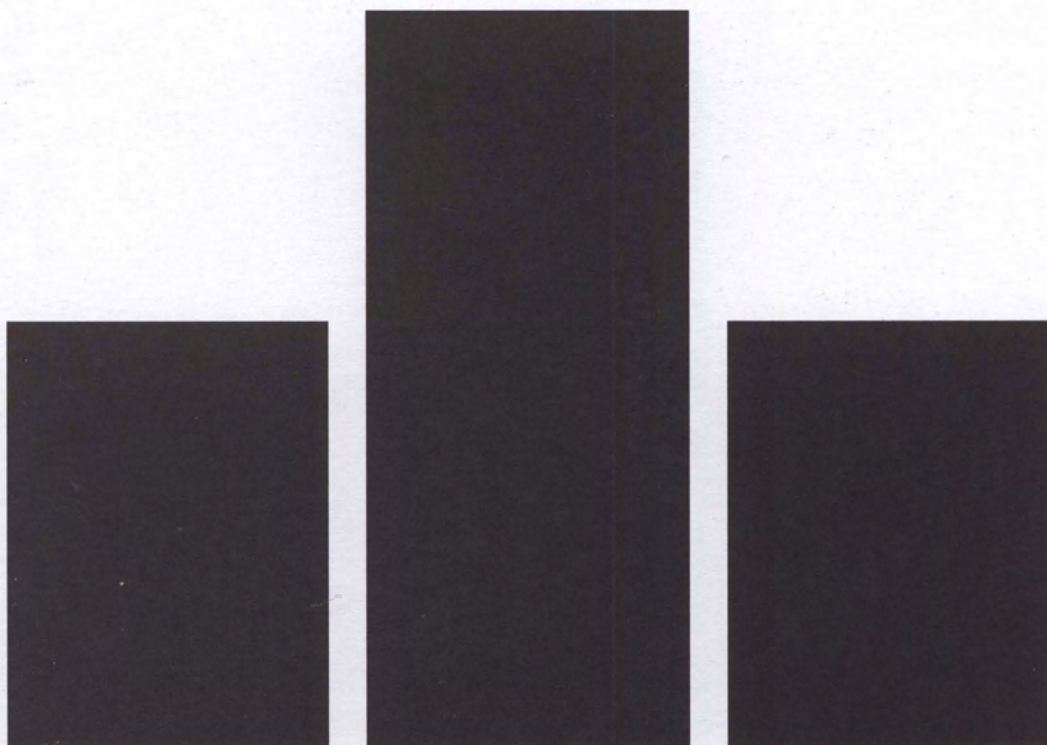
1996—1998 MA in Fine Art BIAD

Gimė: 1969

Išsilavinimas:

2002—dabar: Middelsexo universitetas: Vaizduojamojo meno aspirantūra

1996—1998 BIAD: Vaizduojamojo meno magistras



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**NEW LONDON SCHOOL**

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15. – 19.10.2008

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CURATED by  
Zavier Ellis  
& Simon Rumley

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# FOREWORD

The Future Can Wait evolved from a series of talks in 2006 and 2007. We came together because we had independently collected or exhibited a core of artists over the previous five years: Gavin Nolan, James Jessop, John Stark, Alex Gene Morrison and Hugh Mendes to name a few. It was clear that we had similar interests and were moving in the same circles, despite having met each other only once before. At that point there was a great deal of activity around the Rockwell Project, Rosy Wilde, Sartorial and CHARLIE SMITH london, where an absolute synergy was developing. It became clear that we wanted to do something together and we wanted to do something bigger than we had done before.

We launched the first show last year on a grand scale. By taking some of the good points of the art fair format like scale, impact and duration, and realizing that the public were eager for a return to curated exhibitions as an alternative, we developed our model. The inaugural event featured 43 artists in a 15,000 sq ft space in Brick Lane's Old Truman Brewery and we decided to focus initially on London based or London educated artists. We wanted to make this a survey show of London's most exciting up and coming talent, which is where our core interest really lies. And as we did this we soon realized that most of the artists had an exciting sense of independence that matched our own. The show opened with a massive 3000 people at the private view, thus launching Frieze week with a bang. The reception was exceptional in every sense and led to invitations to curate gallery shows in Rome, Naples and LA. We are also in talks with galleries, curators and museums in Hong Kong, Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich about other potential projects.

This year's event sees us scale up substantially. We have taken on a 22,000 sq ft space, again in the Old Truman Brewery, and will exhibit 48 artists. Many of these were with us last year, but we are really excited to introduce a number of new names, some of them recent graduates, and one who is actually still schooling at the Royal Academy in Tim Ellis. We really like to introduce young artists to reflect the wealth of talent consistently coming through the schools in London. Combined with more established names, we hope to make this show an essential overview of the space between emerging and mid career. Reflecting on 2007, artists like Tessa Farmer, Gordon Cheung and Stella Vine were a great combination with recent graduates like Sam Jackson, Chia-En Jao and Simon Cunningham, all of whom continue to go from strength to strength.

As well as introducing a large amount of new artists 2008 also sees a slight shift in emphasis. Approximately half of them work in mediums other than painting including video, performance, installation and sculpture as opposed to two thirds painting last year. Still though, we maintain our focus on generally challenging subject matter. Horror, beauty, violence, death, sexuality and psychological intensity continue to be the main bastions of our curatorial bent.

Zavier Ellis & Simon Rumley





# THE ARTISTS

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002 KEI BENDER  
003 EMMA BENNETT  
004 KIERA BENNETT  
005 APPAU BOAKYE-YIADOM JR  
006 GORDON CHEUNG  
007 CHRISTOPHER DAVIES  
008 HELEN DOWLING  
009 TIM ELLIS  
010 NADINE FEINSON  
011 ANDREA GREGSON  
012 NEIL HAMON  
013 DAVID HANCOCK  
014 AISLING HEDGEcock  
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016 LUKE JACKSON  
017 SAM JACKSON  
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019 CHIA-EN JAO  
020 REBECCA KIDSON  
021 GAYLE CHONG KWAN  
022 ADAM LATHAM  
023 JULIANA CERQUEIRA LEITE  
024 ROBIN MASON

025 RUI MATSUNAGA  
026 KATE MCCGWIRE  
027 SARAH MCGINITY  
028 MARK MCGOWAN  
029 HUGH MENDES  
030 ALEXIS MILNE  
031 JOCK MOONEY  
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033 RICHARD MOON  
034 TAMSIN MORSE  
035 GAVIN NOLAN  
036 MARGARET O'BRIEN  
037 JANAK ODEDRA  
038 KIM RUGG  
039 JAMES RUSSELL  
040 MIHO SATO  
041 PIERS SECUNDA  
042 DOMINIC SHEPHERD  
043 JOHN STARK  
044 ERIK TIDEMANN  
045 GAVIN TREMLETT  
046 WILL TUCK  
047 JAMES UNSWORTH  
048 MIRANDA WHALL

<p>BORN</p> <p>UK. 1969</p> <p>LIVES   WORKS</p> <p>Nottingham. UK</p> <p>EDUCATION</p> <p>2002 – current</p> <p>PhD Fine Art.</p> <p>Middlesex</p> <p>University</p> <p>1996 – 1998</p> <p>MA Fine Art.</p> <p>Birmingham</p> <p>Institute of Art</p> <p>and Design</p> <p>1989 – 1992</p> <p>BA (Hons) Fine Art.</p> <p>Nottingham Trent</p> <p>University</p> <p>OPPOSITE</p> <p>Tonguing.</p> <p>Performance.</p> <p>2008</p> <p>Image courtesy</p> <p>of Antonio Juarez.</p> <p>Centro de</p> <p>Documentacion.</p> <p>Ex Teresa Arte</p> <p>Actual</p>	<p>SOLO EXHIBITIONS</p> <p>2007 Five Years. Artsadmin. London</p> <p>SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS</p> <p>2007 Il Giardino Segreto. Primo Piano LivinGallery.</p> <p>Lecce</p> <p>I Am Your Worst Nightmare. Arnolfini. Bristol</p> <p>Les Carnival des Animaux. The Embassy.</p> <p>Edinburgh</p> <p>2006 12th International Sample of Performance</p> <p>Art. Ex Teresa Arte Actual. Mexico City</p> <p>Beauty and the Beast. Fieldgate Gallery.</p> <p>London</p> <p>Sensitive Skin. Future Factory. Nottingham</p> <p>Body Parts 2. Royal Scottish Academy.</p> <p>Edinburgh</p> <p>2005 Artconcept. Art Laboratories. St. Petersburg</p> <p>National Review of Live Art. The Arches.</p> <p>Glasgow</p> <p>2004 Inport. Von Krah. Estonia</p> <p>Britney's Smears. Catalyst Arts. Belfast</p> <p>Sensitive Skin. Future Factory. Nottingham</p> <p>Field of Vision. The Lab Gallery. New York</p> <p>2003 East End Collaborations. QMUL. London</p> <p>Brief Interludes. Angel Row Gallery.</p> <p>Nottingham</p>	<p>Closeness is a condition that impacts on the individual. A trace is left as corollary of the sufferance we feel at having an unwanted other close by: the metaphorical stain that is left by an unwelcome approach reminds us that we are mortal and physical beings. Unsolicited and personal, this serves to remind us that we are essentially animal: we wear the effect on our skin. It questions where humanity begins and animality ends.</p>
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Andrew Cranston



James Hopkins



Elizabeth McAlpine



Gernot Wieland



Mervyn Arthur



Anna Okrasko



Angela Bartram



Julie Masterton

# EAST A S T book

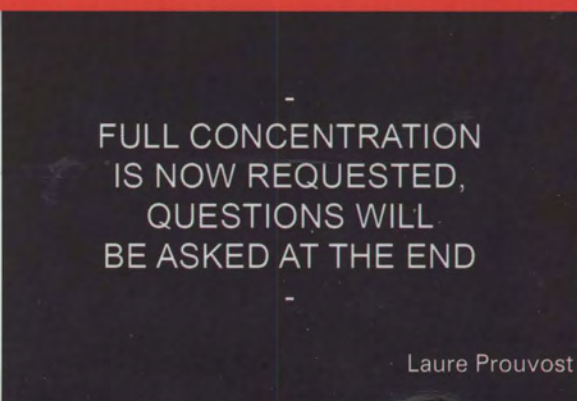
## EAST *international* 2009

selectors

Art & Language and Raster Gallery



Agnieszka Kurant



Laure Prouvost

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# Best A S t book



## Preface

**EAST** is a deliberately provocative and allusive name, in the sense that it has many meanings. Eastern Europe, the Middle East, India, China and the Far East, and politically it means the opposite of West. Of course, it is just a simplification of our location in East Anglia. Both the pluralist meanings of the name **EAST** and our regional location have inspired the development of the exhibition that has become the most respected international exhibition of new art in Britain over the last two decades.

**EAST** has always exploited Norwich's traditional links with Europe across the North Sea. In recent years artists have become an increasingly mobile group spread across European cities. The reputation of **EAST** as a democratic, open, serious opportunity has travelled with them. The Gallery retains contacts with the 500 artists we have worked with here in Norwich and the emails and post from them suggests hardly an exhibition takes places, that does not have at least one **EAST** artist in it. This includes the Turner Prize, the Tate Triennial the Platform for Art and dozens of dealer spaces.

This is my first year at NUCA but I already knew of **EAST** as a project sustained by a regional arts University College. It has been a remarkable event from the start for Norwich University College of the Arts staff and students and for the interest and enthusiasm of people in Norwich for Contemporary Art. Successive years of students have benefited from the experience of working alongside the selected artists as assistants. Other arts organisations in the City have also felt the benefit. It now means something rather special in the world of contemporary art to say you 'come from Norwich'.

People remember the grand north light Riverside Studios of the St Georges and Gunton's buildings in the heart of the city as some of the most beautiful exhibition spaces in England. This year we are working with Raster Gallery from Warsaw and the conceptual art collective, Art & Language.

In 2005 Contemporary Art Norwich was launched by the Arts Council as a festival in the city. CAN is a biennale event and **EAST** has now also become a Biennale. CAN became part of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival in 2007 and this **EAST** has been produced with the support of CAN as part of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival. I would like to thank Jonathan Holloway, Alison McFarlane and their staff for their help. **EAST** could never take place without the help and support of staff throughout NUCA and the 40 strong **EAST** team lead by Lynda Morris, Kaavous Clayton, Eleanor Cherry and Rob Filby.

Professor John Last  
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# Angela Bartram

## *The Exterminating Angel Speaks Unto the Politik*

Claire Pajaczowska

Angels figure a lot in art. Before the Renaissance all art was part of ritual worship to invoke favour or to protect from harm. But when religion began to cede to other forms of power, suddenly the art became full of angels. Paul Klee's beautiful monoprint 'The Angel of History' was Walter Benjamin's favourite artwork. He owned it and kept it. The image, in Klee's characteristic graphic style of hand drawn line, depicts an angel, which faces backwards, reviewing history.<sup>1</sup> Klee's 'The Angel of History' speaks unto us asking we consider the question of which form is most appropriate for political art. The angel is messenger, and more significant than the signifier, it asks us to consider the signified, which is danger. If realism offers us angels of annunciation, glad tidings and benedictions, then modernism offers us 'Exterminating Angels' bearing the unwelcome news of the end of the empire of the ego.

Over the past decade it has become familiar to find groups of people standing watching something that is not in any ordinary sense, spectacular. The genre of site-specific installation art has taken root in our urban centres. Not only authorised by galleries and museums, or the recognisably theatrical mime of the 'human statues' that thrive wherever drama students inhabit, but in the most unexpected spaces of what the Situationists called 'everyday life' in the quotidian world of the undramatised, do we find artworks of extraordinary intensity and meaning. Today's site-specific installations are, perhaps, descendents of the performance art movement, the 'happenings' that characterised the Agitprop of counterculture in the age of 'Expanded Cinema' and boundaries transgressed. The site-specific art of installation may include human action, or may be composed of the trace of some human intervention that has already taken

place and has left its indices, like tracks, or materialised memories.

The role of the catalogue is thus important in recording the installation, and in providing historical information that enables the viewer to register their experience as a response to an artwork. For years Art & Language made work within the gap that existed between artwork and catalogue, so that the latter could no longer be seen as the accompanying notes to the 'real thing'. Since the advent of conceptual art the writing might lay claim to have the same status as the art, and the artist might claim to have no further need of the critic. The division of labour between inarticulate artwork and loquacious critic was renegotiated, and the artwork, the angel of extermination, spoke for itself with its unwelcome news. Angela Bartram's pieces are such works, sometimes taking the spectator unawares and sometimes existing on the margins of what might be considered to be art. The pieces that Angela enacts with dogs or with inanimate objects all refer us to our mammalian origins. The mammals are distinct from all other species by the fact that they lactate and feed their young. This generates the oral universe of sense and fantasy that underwrites the entire human culture. All forms of perception are variants of the primal act of oral ingestion. To see is to devour, suggested the early 'Freudians'. Thus optic relationship becomes an embodied relationship, in which the eye is not only located within the cranium at the top of the spine, as in an 'anatomically correct'; diagram of the position of the organ of sight, but is, metaphorically, positioned within every organ of reception. This, 'experientially correct' diagram of the body is one which is not easily reconciled with anatomy. The fact that the body is inhabited in infancy and that this experience is laid down in the memory as neural traces, which can be reactivated in adult experience, is the basis of most psychoanalytic concepts of fantasy.

It was French Structuralist Julia Kristeva who first mapped out the political significance of this. In her book 'The Revolution of Poetic Language' (1974) she notes that the relation between form and content is analogous to the relation between Oedipal and

1. Exhibited at the 'Documenta 12', Kassel, 2007. Curated by A Kovack as a comment on the history of Kassel, a town in which the most violent of Nazi pogroms against the Jews took place, and thus a place which seeks expiation every five years through the ritual worship of art as a protective force.



Pre-Oedipal (maternal feminine) knowledge. Suddenly the whole formalist project of Modernism took on gender significance alongside the idea that form must be made visible in order to acknowledge the significance of labour.

Angela Bartram's work operates entirely within this problematic. She uses our most mammalian of instincts, the oral and the optical, to conflict with our innate human nature of reaction formations of disgust and shame. The artwork as a performative installation, occupies the space in which is described the relations between instinctive and human responses. Kristeva has named this space 'the abject' and Angela Bartram works with the material of abjection, mouths without edges, unknowable spaces that defy classification as public or private, animals that are too close to be pets, the performance of acts of random intimacy such as sucking at a sugar tongue in her piece 'Tonguing' (2006), or spitting at the face of an accomplice then licking off the spit from her face, washing her mouth out with soap and water in a public bathroom.



Amongst the responses that Angela elicits in her viewers are the visceral disgust and repulsion that usually accompany the transgression of thresholds of decency and shame. The video work that shows her exchanging sloppy wet drooling licking 'kisses' with her dogs focuses attention on animal and human saliva. Saliva is abject as the instinctive drooling that indicates excitation of appetite. Saliva is fine when it is kept within, but is abject when it trickles down the face or is spat at another (only babies and the elderly escape our derision towards the drooling). Because

saliva has this function of indicating the state of the body boundary and of giving material presence to an imaginary entity (the boundary is always an idea, not a thing), saliva symbolises the immateriality of the imaginary. It is a sort of demonic and yet magical element. Kristeva has noted the proximity of the antithetical meanings of the sacred, which in French language is simultaneously a term of abuse and a term of reverence. Saliva connotes both purifying water and dirty semen. Its sexual significance is just one of the meanings with which Angela Bartram's work plays. Think of the magical status of human body liquids, as Edmund Leach does.<sup>2</sup> The body liquids that seep, trickle, ooze or squirt from the many sphincters of the body are symbols of the fact that we are not in command of the apertures within the body politik. A body liquid is to the organ of excretion as the 'alien' is to the 'home', and all substances that signify schism, loss, separation and extinction of mastery also signify sex. The act of mixing the saliva of woman and dog evokes a complex abjection which connotes bestiality, the excess of British sentimental attachments to their domesticated species as 'friends', and the ambivalent fear of all 'wild things'. When watching Angela's work it is interesting to note that the Islamic prohibition on contact with dogs relates not to the animal itself, but to the dog's saliva. It becomes clear, through Angela's rituals of abjection, that religious prohibitions are expressions of unconscious sexual and social fantasies.

Unless the political theory of art can begin to understand the depths from which these fears arise it is doomed to atrophy into the archives of art criticism. If we want art theory to remain alive and kicking we better start thinking way before language. Let the 'Exterminating Angels' of abject performativity speak unto us and remind us of the origins of art and religion in the same place as sex and violence.

Let us listen to the unspoken voices of the angels from that most unwelcome of other worlds, the unconscious.

*(This essay is dedicated to the life and work of Charles Harrison, art history lecturer at Watford School of Art and Design 1973)*

2. Edmund Leach 'Animal Categories and Verbal Abuse' in E. Lennenberg *New Directions in the Study of Language* (1967)

"Woman getting intimate with four male dogs", "Inter-species French kissing", "Heavy licking" – any such subtitle to the pithy *Licking Dogs*, the title of Angela Bartram's video (2007), would only further point to the undeniable, deliberately provocative act of hubris the work is serving up for its viewers.

In modern English usage, 'hubris' denotes any



outrageous treatment, encompassing the exhibitionist flouting of moral norms. Etymologically, it is the Greek 'hybris' – a surfeit, the excess impetus that so often animates humans, an overflow, a spillage over the brim of any restrictive receptacle. It is also cognate with 'hybrid', from the Latin 'hibrida' (or 'ibrida'), meaning mongrel, a fusion of species, a composite being. In Angela's video piece, all three valences of the word find their resonance.

The notion of a hybrid creature has long exercised the human imagination, in some cultures well before Homer mentioned the Chimera in his *Iliad* as the grafting of three distinct animal parts into a coherent yet frightful body. In time, hybrids averred themselves to be carnal canvases on to which to project, and therefore by the Middle Ages the Chimera became associated with lust or *amoris fluctatio*, the creature's tripartite body mapping what were considered to be the corresponding stages of casual love: from titillation through consummation to remorse. The erotic charge in Angela's performance piece seems to emanate,

conversely, from an intoxicating and sustained indeterminacy that compels the viewer to keep on watching, wet kiss after passionate wet kiss, the blurring of boundaries between woman and beast.

Mythological precedents of the morphing of animal and human into a single being can be found amongst centaurs, sirens, fauns, sphinges, to name but a few. In his *City of God*, St Augustine mentions the cynocephalus (XVI.8), a humanoid whose dog head and whose barking, however, earn it the appellation of monster, alongside entire races of monstrous humans (*monstrosa hominum genera*) believed at the time to people some unreachable stretches of the earth. Etymologically, the function of a monster is to show (*monstrum monstrat*), to point up, to portend what is to become visible.

Questions of visibility and identity abound in Angela's work in general, and in this piece in particular. Just like in the Middle Ages, here the animal fulfils a specular function, although the specularity is of a different order. In medieval bestiaries the animal world – real or imaginary – would exert a strong influence on human self-reflection by virtue of its graduated allegorical role. However, whereas this was achieved largely by endowing animals therein with human behaviour, through a process of *inversus mundi* (a reversal of gravity poles), in Angela's video it is the human who adopts and mirrors the animals' behaviour, in all four instances (this becomes quite explicit with the last dog).

In the Renaissance manner of a cynophile Titian or Veronese, but especially that of a Piero di Cosimo<sup>2</sup>, here we have – through monstification, through the specularisation of self in an other – the portrait of the artist as a German shepherd dog (*pace*, Dylan Thomas), as a Rottweiler, a St Bernard, a Patterdale terrier. With each of the four dogs the dynamic sitter forms a pair of animate gargoyles, those human/animal hybrids defined primarily by their mouths' effluvia. But whereas in the architectural bestiaries the gargoyles spout drainpipe rainwater, their video counterparts eject oral fluids and tongues –



pink fleshy axes on which one life form is spun round the other, where the struggle for ascendancy between anthropomorphism and cynomorphism is transacted in a tight lingual duel, sexually charged.

Acquiring an almost independent existence as two *disjecta membra*, the two tongues in each of the responsive exchanges are frenetically released and reclaimed by the mouth, that locus of essential trans-substantiation. On the human side of the mirrored image, licking her way into a non-human corporeality, sculpting with her tongue a private desideratum of self-replication through canid doubling, Angela becomes a female Cerberus guarding against any possible return from her own cynomorphosis, once the Styx of transformation has been crossed. On the animal side, her serial partners<sup>3</sup> mutter their nuptial vows to her, by turns: "With this tongue I thee mute; with it I lick off all traces of your mother tongue from your tongue. Then shall our free lingual embrace be language-free. Then shall you resemble me, your reflection. And then shall our heraldry be one."

A tongue that is poignantly devoid of speech is the privileged organ of expression in Angela Bartram's



performances, often acting as a cipher for her whole body, as happens in *Tonguing* (2006). There, she uses it as an inverted paint brush with whose applied strokes she builds down rather than up, dematerialising, methodically licking to near-annihilation an exact replica of her own tongue cast in hard-as-rock, edible sweetness.

In both performance pieces other people's language forms an exoskeleton to her art; an emphatically a(nti)linguistic – though heavily lingual – art. A contemporary urgency in the performative arts has been discernible in the seeming prevalence for extravasation of the self, an imperative to use either the body or one's intimate history as an inside-out glove, revealing (with perhaps tragic ostentation) its entrails, down to the minutest particle – a modern-day hepatoscopy of ancient portents, sacrificially obtained, proffered to the *haruspex maximus* (the modern wordsmith *cum* audience) for divination.

As we have seen, in the Middle Ages monsters were expressions of fear of a topographical unknown. A vestige of medieval apprehension (however incongruously), the Cartesian conceptualisation of creative imagination later relied precisely on the figure of the monster in art as a paradigm.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the modern conditions for the emergence of creative hybrids are not obscure zones of the unconscious, but unhurried acts of splicing phoneme with phoneme and depositing them, candy-like, on to an outstretched, agile tongue.

1. Adapted for a contemporary context, Horace's famous axiom from his *Ars poetica*, with a nod to H. Borggrete et al., *Der gemalte Fürstenstaat : Moritz der Gelehrte und das Bildprogramm in Eschwege* (Marburg: Jonas, c2000)

2. His mythological paintings were populated with animal/human hybrids and he himself, owing to his eccentricity and predilections, was said by Vasari to have been more beast than man.

3. Evolutionary psychology offers the notion of *assortative pairing*, an unconscious seeking of various criteria of similarity or dissimilarity with the being in whom one is reflected.

4. First of 6 Meditations, René Descartes *Les méditations métaphysiques*, 3rd ed. (Paris: Michel Bobin & Nicolas le Gras, 1673): p.15.